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**IN MEMORY OF  
WILLIAM McKINLEY**











# IN MEMORIAM

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Poems Relating to the Assassina-  
tion and Death of the

**HON. WILLIAM McKINLEY**

Twenty-fifth President of the  
United States

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Born: Niles, Ohio, January 29, 1843  
Died: Buffalo, N. Y., Sept. 14, 1901

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Composed by  
**MOSES W. PORTER**  
Topeka, Kansas

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Respectfully dedicated to Mrs. Ida S. McKinley, beloved and surviving wife of President McKinley, by her special permission, as a partial reciprocation of her manifold kindnesses; knowing, aye, appreciating, the power of kindness is beyond humble, human words to measure. Only those, like myself, whose lives have been thus permeated, truly realize what a boon, a bounty, a blessing, kindness is, and how easy it is to administer; bringing cheerfulness and smiles to the lonely and sad-hearted; brightening others' lives with joy they cannot create for themselves—joy akin to the joy of Heaven—joy supreme—joy everlasting.

THE AUTHOR.



## FOREWORD

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The accompanying poems are in themselves self-explanatory. I proffer them to you in the spirit in which they are written, and sincerely trust you may find them worthy of perusal. My acquaintance with our late lamented and martyred President enabled me to know many of his characteristics. Among these was his love of all nature—especially the trees and flowers. This inspired me to blend the more salient traits of his character, together with his attributes, into an elegy. The opening poem is based on realistic scenes in this—the Capital City of Kansas—where he had a great many admirers, irrespective of party, and was generally loved.

Rest on, embalmed and sainted dead!  
Dear as the blood ye gave,  
No impious footstep here shall tread  
The herbage of your grave.

—Theodore O'Hara



## **PRESIDENT McKINLEY'S ASSASSINATION**

---

It was in Topeka, Kansas, on  
Sixth of September,  
Nineteen hundred and one,  
The date is easy to remember.  
It was drawing near four o'clock,  
People were on the street;  
They little dreamed of the shock  
Telegraph was soon to relate.

In an instant—without warning—  
There was a sudden hush.  
News had come and it was startling—  
And a pause in the rush.  
“President shot!” Newsboys shouted,  
“At Buffalo, New York;”  
The awful news then related—  
“It was a crank’s cruel work.”

From Klondike's ice-bound mountains,  
From many cities inland,  
Thousands are watching the bulletins—  
Anxious on every hand.  
In Cuban and Filipino harbor,  
With hard-pronouncing name,  
Still others are watching and eager—  
News to hear and proclaim.

Felled by the assassin's hand,  
Our grand Chief Magistrate;  
Beloved throughout the whole land—  
Honored in every State.  
In vain is the wretch's cruel deed,  
God has saved him to our nation;  
The news is most joyfully read—  
Like a benediction.

Skilled physicians at his bedside—  
Each symptom carefully note;  
Telegraph carries news broadside  
Into cities and villages remote.





MRS. IDA S. MCKINLEY



Heralded by many a newsboy,  
On Topeka's crowded street,  
Each word is heard with greatest joy  
Whenever people meet.

A loyal, brave wife is near at hand,  
Her devotion to prove;  
And her prayers hourly ascend,  
To the All-Wise Father above.  
Thousands join her in her sorrow—  
In words and songs of praise—  
Trusting, hoping that the morrow  
Will be added to his days.

Sweet and blessed are the tidings—  
His recovery proclaim.  
Some future day let thanksgivings  
Be given in God's name—  
Thankful that he be spared many  
Years to guide our nation  
To her more glorious destiny—  
Liberty's full fruition.

We must this great lesson culture—  
Nor can we the people deceive—  
That assassins in the future  
In our land cannot live.  
New laws must be enacted  
Stamping disapproval.  
Serpent or anarchy must be crushed;  
Welcoming only loyal.

Again the telegraph doth flash  
The news across the land.  
Here and there newsboys dash  
With the daily papers, and  
Announce his death in loud tones;  
While hundreds stop and learn  
The same in saddest monotones,  
And spread the news in turn.

He's gone. And will receive reward  
For the noble part he took.  
As such, was held in high regard  
Wherever one may search or look.

Amid the Nation's great sorrow  
The country which he glorified  
Will be grander on the morrow,  
Whatever shall betide.

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## OUR NATION'S CHIEF IS DEAD

---

In the gray dawn of the morning,  
In a far distant state,  
Our grand Nation's Chief lay dying—  
Near him friends did await.

Many long hours the doctors spent  
Restoring consciousness  
To their patient—all efforts lent—  
To give him happiness.

They succeeded in this at last;  
He requested that his wife  
Join him at once—ere he passed  
Beyond the scenes of life.

Slowly, quietly there entered  
The form of the dear one  
Round whom his thoughts oft centered  
In days and years ago.

His request was quickly granted;  
Soon they clasped hands. He  
Sweetly, softly, lowly chanted—  
“Nearer, my God, to Thee.”

Oh! what a meeting and greeting—  
Their final one on earth—  
Their last and sorrowful meeting—  
Ere meeting in the land of mirth.

The Angel of Death came nearer;  
The loved one of years  
Still held the hand dear to her,  
And eyes filled with tears.

The once firm, strong voice now was soft  
In calm resignation  
Came the words that are so oft  
Like a benediction.

“It is God’s way. His will be done.”  
Thus were said his last words—  
As his life race was almost run.  
His deeds are part of God’s records.

Our Nation is bowed in grief  
To-day. Flags at half-mast.  
To him death was a sweet relief—  
From suffering at last.

Soon the sad funeral cortege  
Its course onward proceed—  
To his old home and cottage—  
Soon near dear ones be laid.

Oh God, from Whom the boon was given,  
Thou hast but called Thine own.  
God of earth and God of heaven,  
Evermore, “Thy will be done.”

## **SPARE HIM, OH GOD**

---

Great God, we come to Thee,  
In this, our agony.

Hear Thou our prayer;  
Spare him, the Nation's head,  
Watch Thou, beside his bed,  
With grace may he be fed.

Hear Thou our prayer.



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**WILLIAM McKINLEY**

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**A LOVING AND REVERENTIAL TRIBUTE**

---

He's gone! Mourned for far and wide,  
In whom all virtues blend,  
Our knightly soul—the Nation's pride—  
A devoted, true, loving friend.  
He died as he had lived—armor on;  
The Truth, the Right, his battle cry,  
No cross refused, no duty undone;  
He died as good men want to die.

All loved him. Noble and brave  
Heart so full of truest aid.  
On his silent, bloom-crowned grave  
Love's gifts will soon be laid.  
The place will soon be crowned  
With tears of friends of old  
And round that silent floral mound  
God's angels vigils hold.

“Our President.” How doubly true—  
    In all our widespread land  
A nobler one the Nation ne’er knew—  
    In church, state or councils grand.  
In hearts his monument will rise;  
    Imperishable—fore’er—  
His name, his benefactions wise,  
    Are now sculptured there.

Contemplated plans all laid down;  
    Like frost-bitten flowers  
Withered beneath the Death Angel’s frown;  
    Fond spirit enters celestial bowers.  
He answered the call like brave men do—  
    “God’s will be done; not mine;”  
And at once passed from earth-view  
    Into his home divine.

He died when Summer was growing old—  
    Of fruitage and delightful store,  
And rich fields of garnered gold  
    Had fallen before the mower.

Like mature grain, he passed away—  
    In full fruition from earthly sod—  
Into the grander, more glorious day—  
    Bosom of his Father—his God.

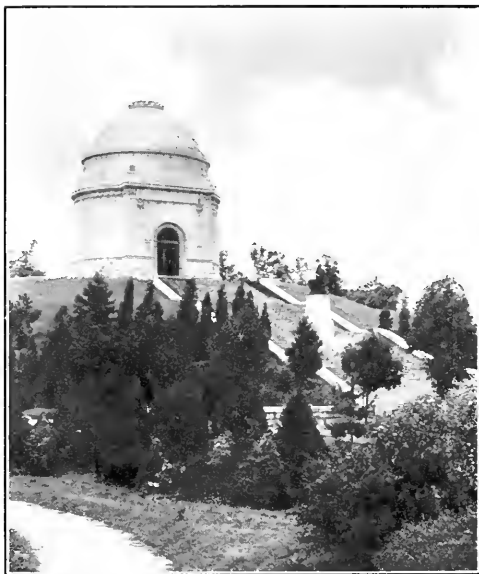
Brighter than floral buds that blend,  
    Or Summer's sweetest sheen,  
The memory of our absent friend  
    Will be forever kept green;  
Till we ourselves are called Above  
    We'll drop a tear tenderly—  
Our own heart's true token of love—  
    To the memory of McKinley.

## A D I R G E

---

The Nation mourns its chief to-day,  
Grieves that the post of honor tendered him  
Proved target for the foulest crime of man.  
'Twas not the chieftain after all was slain;  
That post is ever filled.

But a true man, so honorable and just  
His virtues and abilities made him  
Most capable to guide the affairs  
Of this great land.  
And at that post devoutly loved by all—  
For him we mourn.



TOMB OF PRESIDENT MCKINLEY. CANTON. OHIO



## WREATH HIS GRAVE WITH FLOWERS

---

AN ELEGY IN AFFECTIONATE REMEM-  
BRANCE OF OUR MARTYRED AND  
BELOVED PRESIDENT

---

Cover his grave with flowers—  
A tribute love demands;  
Emblems of Edenic bowers—  
Spread by loving hands.

Flowers—their language to portray  
Life of the departed;  
Flowers—that will comfort and stay  
His companion sad-hearted.

Flowers—perhaps those selected,  
Would not have been his choice;  
I have only interpreted  
The words of Nature's voice.

'Tis said that Dame Nature gives  
To man her sweetest flowers,  
To console him while he lives  
In this mortal sphere of ours.

The Pink Carnation he loved best—  
Signifying "Woman's Love;"  
One dearer to him than all the rest—  
Love given from God above.

Oft on his breast it did appear,  
Oft its "sweet small voice"  
Was his solace, comfort and cheer—  
Causing him to rejoice.

Let the Myrtle entwine his grave,  
And thus attest the "Love"  
Of friends, who admired his brave  
Heart; though mild as a dove.

May the "Stately Elm" ever wave  
Its branches near by. Emblem  
Of "Patriotism" God gave  
And with it crowned him.



The Black Poplar doth evidence  
His "Courage" and his grand  
Manhood, and must ever convince  
Others to take a firm stand.

Water Lily recites "Purity of Heart,"  
Our Chief's choicest treasure;  
More to be prized than any art—  
Beyond the power of words to measure.

Jassamine stands for "Attachment"  
Of friends or loved one,  
Those whom the Good Father has sent  
To guide us when alone.

About his sepulchre  
The Trumpet Flower winds—  
A "Separation" we infer  
Which the living closely binds.

Strew flowers of rarest hue,  
Cover his grave while you may  
Flowers crowned with Heaven's blue—  
Flowers to return with the May.

The Marigold will signify  
Our Nation's grief and sorrow;  
While the Almond will imply  
The bright hopes of the Morrow.

Place the White Chrysanthemum near  
And bid the world rejoice;  
For "Truth" will conquer—never fear—  
A "Truth" is wisdom's voice.

Allow the Fern to wave and spread—  
"Sincerity"—implying  
The character of our precious dead;  
All evil thoughts defying.

Scarlet Geranium—message  
Of "Comfort" it truly gives  
To lonely hearts, or assuage  
Sorrows of others' lives.

Heliotrope speaks of the "Devotion"  
Which he ever showed  
To his wife—until dissolution—  
When to God's will he bowed.

To the living Poppy is given  
For sweet "Consolation,"  
To each and all his countrymen  
Despite separation.

The Lilacs teach a lesson grand—  
"Confidence" in meeting  
In the happy Summer-land  
An eternal heavenly greeting.

Heap the roses rich and rare;  
Rejoice for all is well—  
God reigns and with a loving care—  
No minstrel's pen can tell.

Beautiful thoughts make beautiful lives  
And every word and deed  
Lies in the thought that prompted it,  
As the flower lies in the seed.

Let the Phlox attest "Unanimity"—or  
The universal grief  
Our people did stand and endure for  
Their martyred Chief.

The beautiful trees in splendor  
    Afforded him great joy—  
'Mid the pains he so bravely bore—  
    Pleasure free from alloy.

The Palm will recall the "Victory"  
    Of death—good and sublime—  
Also, consecrate his life story  
    To men of all future time.

Plant Snowdrops on his Floral mound,  
    And thus manifest "Hope"  
Of greeting, whither angels abound—  
    Beyond the Mountain's slope.

Blue Violets convey "Faithfulness,"  
    God's fidelity to those  
Who repose in Him their happiness  
    And His laws do not interpose.

Zinnia—"Thoughts of absent ones"—  
    His dear ones gone before;  
With whom all feeling tends  
    And draws him to their distant shore.



MEMORIAL TO PRESIDENT MCKINLEY, CANTON, OHIO



The For-Get-Me-Not doth bespeak  
Of "True Love"—God's dower  
To mankind, if they shall truly seek  
And ask for his power.

Bell Flower tells of his "Gratitude"—  
An attribute divine—  
Grateful that his example of fortitude  
May never wane or decline.

He was a man of "Frugality"—  
Chicory's emblem—  
And handed it down to posterity—  
To be preserved by them.

Of "Industry" the Clover speaks—  
The public ever serving—  
As one who lives and one who seeks,  
Only to be deserving.

The solemn Purple Columbine  
Tells not of repose—  
But of stern purpose—"Resolved to win,"  
In spite of many foes.

Strength is signified by the Cedar  
It was his life's potency;  
And helped him to prepare  
For any exigency.

Strew his tomb with flowers of beauty,  
Ere their fragrance has flown;  
Cherish his example of duty—  
Make his standard your own.

The Red Salvia doth signify  
"Simplicity" and sincerity;  
The latter will ever beautify  
Our world by honesty

Of purpose, shown by our Chieftain;  
With naught to conceal or hide—  
His sole thought was the Nation's gain—  
And to act as humble guide.

Dead leaves are Autumn's harbinger,  
And relates The "Sorrow"  
For our friend and the traveler  
Who's gone, whither soft zephyrs blow



Mint is a token of "Virtue"—  
Moral goodness of men  
And that which all know to be true;  
'Tis power, God given.

Mulberry is indicative  
"Of his "Wisdom"—learning—  
That will continue—survive—  
And be the world's mainspring.

Pansies bring "Thoughts"—from above,  
Full of harmony divine,  
And of the one all truly love—  
Now in the land of sunshine.

Oh, beautiful Pansies—  
You're thoughts from the world of  
God—

And from the heart covered over  
Lately with the grave's green sod.

Tho' friend after friend lives and dies,  
There are happier days to come—  
A grand re-union beyond the skies—  
In the land of deathless bloom.

Olive sings of sweet Peace—quietness  
Of mind of our late Chief—  
Likewise, his self-forgetfulness  
And wish to assuage grief.

Let the welkin ever ring  
For our sainted dead—  
Let all join us as we sing—  
Ere we, too, death's valley treat.

His attributes were good and many—  
Too many to enumerate;  
Presaging his glorious destiny  
In the land we love to relate.

In California's sunny clime  
The Orange Tree doth thrive  
Inspiring "Generosity"—sublime  
Thoughts—way our Chief did live.

Wlid grapes ever denote and promote  
"Charity"—from God above;  
It was his best pleasure—and keynote  
To infuse and imbue love.

He was ever true and faithful  
To others in times of woe.  
This he adhered to—his life rule;  
Yew is the sign here below.

Daphne's theme is "Immortality,"  
And the "bright border-land"—  
Whence we're relieved from earthly duty;  
Whither is the "Golden strand."

In the sweet and happy border land—  
With loud acclaims they come;  
Father and mother and children stand  
To welcome him to his home.

Flowers are truly treasure trove—  
Given to man by an unseen hand—  
Silent and sweet messengers of love—  
Indicative of the "promised land."

Flowers—to us ever presage  
The dear ones whom we miss  
And by them send a message—  
From their strange, new world to this.

Resignation and sweet submission  
Embodied in this great man—  
'Twill ever live with the Nation—  
Cherished as only memory can.

He approached nearer the goal,  
And spoke in broken tones—  
Words that marked his good, true soul,  
“God’s will, not mine, be done.”

In his last and conscious hours he  
Found true comfort singing  
The hymn, “Nearer, my God, to Thee;”  
Angels in heaven joining.

Ever wreath his grave with flowers—  
Emblems of purity—  
Betokening Heaven’s bowers—  
Man’s immortality.

## OUR COMPENSATION

---

Among the nations Columbia weeps  
At the bier of her favorite son,  
While millions with her the vigil keep—  
A common sorrow makes them one.

All aroused by the same dread news;  
Feeling alike the same dread fear—  
One spirit every soul imbues—  
Consecrating every tear.

But tho' darkness overshadows all,  
One cheering truth sweet comfort  
gives—  
God still reigns, whate'er befall;  
And still our Nation lives.

## A F T E R W O R D

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The thoughts herein are not the result of long-continued study. The thoughts, in most cases, came unsought, like a ray of unexpected light, after the vistas, came one at a time, as the thought revolved and shed a ray here and there upon them. In some cases I felt impelled to sit down and write, and as I wrote the subject unfolded itself automatically, as it were, before me. At other times, it was born into my mind in the same way, while working or walking. But in all cases, I felt surprised and uplifted, as by reading words of the master mind whom these poems commemorate.



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